

Bystander Intervention as an Injury Prevention Strategy

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Injury Prevention and Control
"Prevention and Responding to Injuries"

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What is our greatest community asset?

The values and ideals of its members

Most people care and want to do what is right

Most individuals are uncomfortable with health
risk behaviors and injustice

What is a bystander?

- A bystander is someone who "stands by" and does not do anything when they notice a problematic situation or behavior even though they may find the behavior to be problematic.
- For almost all health and social justice problems there are bystanders

Contexts for Bystander Intervention in Injury Prevention

- To prevent dangerous behavior
- To interrupt enabling/problematic remarks
- To promote and reinforce protective factors
- To confront negative health behaviors
- To foster system change
- To help someone you care about

Key Points

- Bystanders are in a position to intervene to prevent health-risk behaviors and social injustices and shift the climate that permits them
- Individuals can be taught to overcome their inhibitions to intervene and learn skills to do so effectively
- Individuals underestimate the willingness of others to "be part of the solution"

Levels of Bystander Behavior

- To an individual
- To a group
- To a system or institution

Stages of Bystander Behavior

- Notice the event
- Interpret it as a problem
- Feel responsible for dealing with it
- Have the necessary skills to act

Reasons for Bystander Behavior

- Assume that it isn't a problem because others don't intervene (social influence)
- Fear of embarrassment (audience inhibition)
- Assume that someone else will do something (diffusion of responsibility)
- Believe that others' aren't bothered (social norms)
- Fear of retaliation or negative outcomes

The presence of other's can serve to inhibit or support the desire to intervene

Social Norms

- "Social norms" refer to the acceptability of an action or belief
- Are unspoken rules about what is "normal" for that group or setting
- Perceptions of social norms predict what people will say and do.

Social Norms and Bystander Behavior: Underlying Beliefs

- **Pluralistic Ignorance:** the incorrect belief that one's private attitudes, judgments or behavior are different from others.
- **False Consensus:** the incorrect belief that one represents the majority when one is actually a minority.

Effects of Mis-perceiving Norms

- People **over**-estimate risk behaviors and **under**-estimate protective behaviors
- *Misperceived norms* exert powerful (and unconscious) effects on behavior

College Men's Attitudes about Rape Florida State University

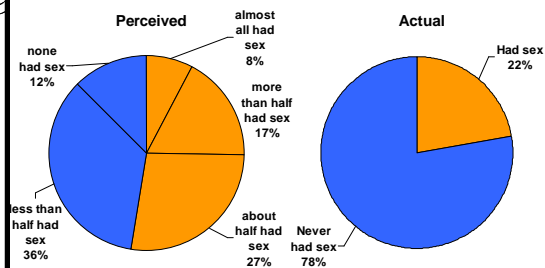
	% who disagree	
	Actual Norm (Self)	Perceived Norm (Most guys)
It is only women who dress suggestively that are raped	79%	44%
A woman who dresses in skimpy clothes should not be surprised if a man forces sex	61%	38%
If a woman is willing to go home with a man consent to have sex is implied	73%	35%
A lot of women lead a guy on and then cry rape	61%	45%

Florida State University Sexual Violence Prevention Survey

Girls perceived v. actual intercourse

By the end of the eighth grade, how many girls do you think have had sexual intercourse?

Have you ever had sexual intercourse (had sex, made love, gone all the way)?



8th grade girls, surveyed June 2002 by PPNYC

Misperceptions that Foster Bystander Behavior

- Individuals are bothered by problem behaviors but underestimate other's discomfort with them and desire to have someone intervene
- Intervention is more likely when others are perceived as willing to intervene
- Problem individuals use the misperception to justify their behavior

Bystander Norms

- 95% of FSU men "would admire someone who intervened to prevent a sexual assault"
- 69% would "ask if everything was OK" when witnessing a man pressuring a woman to leave with him
- 97% if witnessing "someone 'hitting on' a woman I know, would do something to help her"
- But, only 19% intervened when witnessing a situation in which it looked like a female would be taken advantage of (last 12 months)

Florida State University Sexual Violence Prevention Survey

Conclusion

Underestimating other's concern results in less chance of intervening on the part of bystanders
(*pluralistic ignorance*)

Overestimating other's comfort with problem behavior results in more chance of perpetrating
(*false consensus*)

Social Norms and Leadership

- Leaders underestimate other's discomfort and desire to have them intervene
- Leaders are often "carriers of the misperception" and thereby contribute to the problems they are responsible for solving

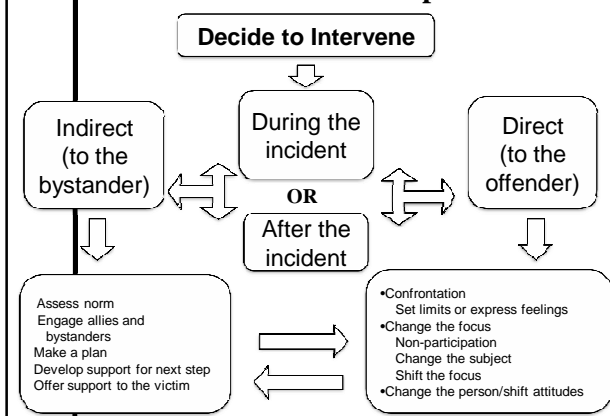
Intervention Options and Strategies

Intervention Options

- Direct versus Indirect: Talk to the person directly or to the others who are present
- On the spot or later: Do something right away or wait
- Types of interventions
 - Confront the person/impose consequences
 - Shift the focus (change the situation)
 - Shift the person (change the person)

Goal: To have more options for responding and feel better about your response

Positive Intervention Options



Different Situations May Require a Different Type of Intervention

- With peers
- With subordinates
- With superiors

Interventions Requiring a Confrontation

It may be necessary to let someone know that certain behaviors and/or remarks are not appropriate and will not be tolerated. This is necessary you are responsible for acting as an enforcer. An intervention of this type can be called a confrontation.

A confrontation can also occur when you tell the other person how you feel about their actions

Shifting the Focus (Changing the Situation)

- Non-participation
- Deflection (change the subject)
- Shift the focus

Changing the Person ("Shifting Attitudes")

- Is non-confrontational
- Helps the person understand *why* the behavior is problematic
- Fosters deeper change

(www.ncbi.org)

Putting it all Together A Model Rape Prevention Program

- Developed by Alan Berkowitz
- Tested by Christine Gidycz of Ohio University in a CDC funded study
- Incorporates definition of consent, normative feedback (group and campus) and practice in bystander intervention strategies (responding to scenarios)
- Offered in parallel with a women's risk-reduction program
- Workshop recipients were men and women in residence halls with matched control groups

Findings for Men at Four Month Follow-up

- Perceived that their peers would be more likely to intervene (including sexually aggressive men)
- Sexually aggressive men perceived less reinforcement from peers for sexually aggressive behavior
- Participants associated less with sexually aggressive peers
- Were less likely to engage in sexually aggressive behavior (1.5% experimental versus 6.7% control)
- Reduced victimization among women (7-month)

What Not to Do

- Avoid use of
 - fear
 - blame
 - shame
 - fostering guilt
- In most cases, "health terrorism" is not an effective health promotion strategy

**If You're Under 21
And Try To Buy Alcohol,
We'll Do Worse
Than Tell Your Mom.**



IT'S NOT A LECTURE, IT'S THE LAW:
THE LEGAL DRINKING AGE IS 21

Pennsylvania Liquor
Control Board
In The Public Interest

It's Not Your Call. It's The Law.

**IMAGINE TELLING
YOUR PARENTS
YOU NEED AN
EXTRA \$12,000
THIS SEMESTER.**



Here's the deal. You force a woman to have sex, and your life is going to become a nightmare. You'll have to get a lawyer. Which costs money. You'll have to go to court. Which costs more money. And you'll have to explain it to your parents. Which may just cost you your relationship.

RAPE TREATMENT CENTER
©2001 Rape Treatment Center, Santa Monica, CA

Research on “Health Terrorism”

Panel Finds that Scare Tactics for Violence Prevention are Harmful

“Programs that use ‘scare tactics’ to prevent children and adolescents from engaging in violent behavior are not only ineffective, but may actually make the problem worse, according to an independent state-of-the-science panel convened this week by the National Institutes of Health.”

NIH Press Release – October 15, 2004

Creating Synergy: Using Positive Social Norms Messages to Foster and Reinforce Bystander Intervention

4 Out of 5 Gateway Guys Really Don't Want To Hear Trash Talk About Girls.



Here's what they do about it:

- TELL THEM TO STOP
- LEAVE THE CONVERSATION
- CHANGE THE SUBJECT
- WARN THEIR FRIENDS ABOUT THE PERSON
- WARN THE PERSON BEING TALKED ABOUT

YOUR SURVEY. YOUR RESULTS.

In a survey taken by Gateway High School students in January 2006, 85% of male students agreed or strongly agreed with the following statement: "I don't like to hear other guys talk trash about girls or women."

This campaign is a collaboration between Gateway High School students and the Southern Illinois University Violence Task Force. Funded by Gateway students. Project funded in part by a grant awarded to the Office of Research for the Southern Illinois Community Assistance Program by the IRLS and the OHSC/HSI/CSOC program.

More than 80% of you agree that in most relationships at Gateway...

- Couples share decision making
- Each Person is allowed to have outside friendships
- Each Person chooses how and where they spend their free time

Data from a survey taken by 349 out of 419 Gateway High School students in January 2006.



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74% OF COLLEGE MEN **WOULD INTERVENE TO PREVENT A SEXUAL ASSAULT**

Be a Friend

With a few well-timed words or actions, you could save a friend from becoming a victim of sexual assault. Or from committing one.

EDNR operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline. If you need help, or know someone who does, please call 1-800-656-HOPE. Free, confidential, 24/7. For survey data or more info, visit www.ednr.org



Recommendations

- Re-frame models of change and leadership
- Focus on the positive and empower the silent majority
- Integrate bystander and social norms theory into our work
- Incorporate perceptions and norms questions into research surveys that will document and empower the silent majority
- Offer bystander intervention training (theory and skills)
- Develop mutually reinforcing, synergistic interventions at different levels of prevention

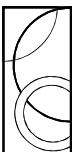


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You mention that the material in this presentation is from my book, "RESPONSE ABILITY: The Complete Guide to Bystander Behavior" available from www.lulu.com



**Thank you for your
willingness to lead by
expressing values in action**



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